

**Minutes of a Meeting of St Ives Town Council
held on Wednesday 14 October 2020 via Zoom**

Present:

Town Mayor: Councillor J Pallant

Deputy Town Mayor: Councillor P Hussain

Councillors: J Tiddy, N Dibben, M King, P Pope, R D'Souza, T Drye, A Ayers-Wilson

In attendance:

Town Clerk: A Benfield

Committee Clerk: S Rawlinson

The Town Mayor's Chaplain said Prayers before the Meeting.

C73.00 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors J Davies, R Fuller and A Dickinson (HDC commitment) and from Councillors L Davies and D Rowe (both Personal).

C74.00 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

C75.00 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Agenda Item C81.00 – A representative from St Ives Eco Group spoke in support of the proposals put forward by the group. St Ives was, she stated, well positioned to improve wildlife habitats having such natural assets as Holt Island and large river meadows. The planting of wildflowers around the town was a good start towards this.

A resident (not in attendance) had sent an email to Members on this subject which raised some questions on how the Nature Recovery Tool might be used effectively.

C76.00 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor at a future date.

C77.00 COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following Minutes were received and noted:

C77.01 Amenities Committee

Held on 23 September 2020.

C77.02 Personnel Committee

Held on 16 September 2020.

C77.03 Planning Committee

Held on 9 September and 23 September 2020.

[Councillor Dr C Pegoraro joined the Meeting]

C77.04 Property Committee

Held on 23 September 2020.

C77.05 Norris Trust

Held on 1 July and 16 September 2020.

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C78.00 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were in receipt of Town Mayor's engagements list. He thanked the Deputy Mayor for attending the Battle of Britain commemoration on his behalf.

C79.00 COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACT REPORT

Members noted that income was down slightly with higher expenditure as was to be expected under the circumstances.

Concern was expressed for the many groups in the town currently struggling and a discussion on ways the Council might help was held.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Council was able to give grants but it was necessary to be mindful when determining which groups should qualify and strong rules on this would need to be put in place in the interests of fairness and transparency.

It was considered good practice to consult with HDC initially to find out which, if any groups, in the town had already received financial support under its own grant scheme.

RESOLVED: that the report be received and noted.

C80.00 REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REGULATIONS AND DELEGATED POWERS**Contractor's Code of Conduct**

Discussion on this policy had been deferred from the previous meeting following a request for clarification by a Member.

The Town Clerk confirmed that if the Council was not satisfied with the quality of work delivered, discussions would be held with the contractor with a view to reaching a mutually agreed resolution of the problem. If resolution was not forthcoming, the Council could look at other action such as appointing another firm to rectify the work and reclaiming costs from the original contractor.

RESOLVED: that the Contractor's Code of Conduct be adopted.

C81.00 ST IVES ECO AUDIT**C81.01 Update Report**

The Town Clerk reported that she had recently spent a few days in discussions with Mr McCarthy of 3 Acorn, the company which was conducting the audit. The full audit was expected to be presented to Council in November. Mr McCarthy had visited all sites under the Council's management and made lots of suggestions for improvements. Some were achievable, others may not be so easily put in place.

She informed the meeting that he had spoken individually with staff members to discuss their individual roles and quoted some interesting statistics such as how many trees would be cut down to produce Council papers and how use of recycled paper for The Bridge and Town Guide might be a way forward. A session for Councillors was scheduled for 7.00 pm the following day.

Improvements in biodiversity would be one of the most prominent areas involving setting aside sections of cemeteries and parks for natural and insect friendly planting. Mr McCarthy had queried why the Council maintained its closed cemeteries to the same high standard as the one in use. He considered these were areas where wild planting would be beneficial. Additionally stopping cutting the unused section of Hill Rise Cemetery and allowing that to go back to nature was an idea he had put forward.

Other suggestions discussed regarding grounds maintenance systems were to have water recovery methods in place at the GM Depot and to look at solar/wind power before introducing

electric powered maintenance equipments and charging tools from a diesel generator was not sustainable.

He also considered that more tree planting was needed and perhaps the creation of a few ponds at the cemetery.

The Town Hall heating system could be replaced using infra-red panel heaters rather than gas fired radiators and ways of replacing the energy used by feeding back into the national grid could be investigated.

RESOLVED: that the verbal report from the Town Clerk be received and noted.

C81.02 Pledge and Local Nature Recovery Toolkit

The Town Mayor thanked the St Ives Eco Action Group for putting together this material provided by Natural Cambridgeshire.

The Toolkit provided information on how to set up a Local Nature Recovery Plan.

Councillor Dibben agreed to assist with the project. He had already done some work in his local vicinity observing wildlife and noting the location of hedgerows. He would help to put together a guidance note to ensure consistency between the various groups who, it was hoped, would be working on this. An electronic map would be of assistance in logging hedgerows, ponds etc.

The Town Mayor also agreed to be involved with the project.

RESOLVED: C81.02.01 that the information be received and noted.

C81.02.02 that the meeting be suspended briefly to enable the representative from the St Ives Eco Action Group to speak

The St Ives Eco Action Group representative thanked Council for its support for the project which, it was hoped would become a whole community endeavour. The Group had many committed professionals working with the environmental sector on its team and as a result of the recent article in The Bridge, three further experts had volunteered to join the group.

C81.02.03 that the meeting be reconvened.

C82.00

MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER

Consideration was given to the Planning White Paper and the draft response compiled by the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

The Town Mayor thanked Councillor Dibben for putting together the draft response for which Members were very grateful. The White Paper was a very comprehensive, detailed document which sought to change how planning matters were handled.

Following discussion Members agreed that while a national policy would make developments more uniform there was a need for the opportunity to make local amendments to suit requirements and the character of the area. It was agreed that the response be amended to include these points.

RESOLVED: that the response, as amended above, be submitted.

C83.00

REPORTS/INFORMATION FROM OTHER BODIES

C83.01 Gt. Ouse Valley Trust

RESOLVED: that the notes of the Meeting held on 22 September 2020 be received and noted.

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C83.02 St Ives Town Team

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 August be received and noted.

C84.00**ROLLING PROGRAMME**

Members discussed the content of the Rolling Programme.

Warner's Park Pavilion – this was still a work in progress. The Town Clerk was still awaiting confirmation that the plans had been submitted. There may be difficulties with obtaining grant funding for the project under the present climate and it may be prudent to review the design proposals in terms of green initiatives.

Neighbourhood Plan – ongoing.

Defibrillators – looking at placing one on the Museum wall.

VE Day – was not held.

LHI Funding – a new section for this year's applications for LHI funding would be added to the next Rolling Programme

CIC Report – the Town Mayor agreed to progress this.

Corn Exchange roof – report to next meeting of the Property Committee

IT – Difficulties had been experienced with the new IT provider. The Town Clerk reported that approaches had been made to the previous company engaged by the Council who were considering if they were able to return to working for the Council as their workload had increased considerably in past months. Authority was sought for this matter to be progressed.

New Software – a new software package designed to keep track of Council assets and maintenance was now in place and staff trained to use it.

Deployment on SIDs on Houghton Road – the Town Clerk was awaiting a response from the County Council on this.

RESOLVED: **C84.01** that the Rolling Programme be received and noted.

C84.02 that authority be delegated to the Town Mayor, Councillor Drye and the Town Clerk to review the decision on IT providers and make more satisfactory arrangements.

C85.00**ORDERS FOR PAYMENT**

RESOLVED: that the Schedule be received and noted.

C86.00**BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT**

RESOLVED: that the Statement be received and noted

C87.00**BUDGET REPORT**

RESOLVED: that the report be received and noted.

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C88.00**POLICE MATTERS**

The Town Mayor reported that the Police Sergeant was currently on leave and that he would contact her on her return.

C89.00**CCTV REPORT**

RESOLVED: that the report for August 2020 be received and noted.

C90.00**COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS**

No Councillors for St Ives were in attendance.

C91.00**DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS**

No Councillors for St Ives were in attendance.

Town Mayor:

Dated:

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